

Roger Sampson

Commissioner

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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Staff in 42 schools earn awards under the Public School Performance Incentive Program

Alaska will distribute \$1,850,493 to educators and support staff in the first year of the Alaska Public School Performance Incentive Program, Education Commissioner Roger Sampson said today.

The program, a three-year pilot, provides incentive payments to eligible staff members at schools whose students show significant improvement from the year before -- or whose students continue to achieve at high levels -- in state assessments of reading, writing and math. Those assessments are aligned to state academic standards.

"We know that when everyone on a school staff, from the custodians to the principal, create a learning environment designed to meet each student's needs in these critical subject areas, student achievement will increase," Commissioner Sampson said.

"The program goes beyond No Child Left Behind to recognize the importance of even the proficient students continuing to grow academically. And it provides encouragement to schools that are below proficient but improving," he said.

For the 2006-2007 school year, 770 staff members at 42 schools in 15 districts will share in \$1,762,375 in incentive payments, and district wide staff who contributed to those schools' success will share in \$88,118.75 in payments. The exact number of district wide staff who will receive incentive payments will be determined later this month.

The incentive program was designed so that no type of school would have an advantage over another.

"The results this year demonstrate the effectiveness of our scoring method. Recipients include large and small schools, rural and urban schools, and elementary and secondary schools statewide," said Les Morse, Director of Assessment, Accountability and Information Management. "It was especially encouraging to see that many of the awarded schools have a significant number of economically disadvantaged students."

Under the incentive program, schools receive points based on whether each student has moved forward, remained stable, or moved backward among seven levels of achievement on the state assessments. The points are totaled, divided by the number of assessments the students took, and compared to a table of performance levels.

“The incentive program rewards schools whose students have made more than the usual year’s growth. Their students have done more than just progress from one grade level to the next. The incentive program is the first statewide effort in Alaska that ties staff compensation to student achievement,” Commissioner Sampson said.

There are four performance levels that earn incentive payments and therefore four levels of payments. From the lowest to the highest-ranking, they are:

Strong: \$2,500 certificated staff (teachers and principals), \$1,000 non-certificated staff (support staff).

High: \$3,500 certificated, \$1,500 non-certificated.

Excellent: \$4,500 certificated, \$2,000 non-certificated

Outstanding: \$5,500 certificated, \$2,500 non-certificated.

For the 2006-2007 school year, 12 schools were deemed strong, 14 high, 6 excellent, and 10 outstanding.

For more information, see: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/spip/> or contact Les Morse at 907-465-8691 or Information Officer Eric Fry at 907-465-2851, cell 321-5564.

As previously announced, a teleconferenced news conference will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, August 14, originating from the Governor's Office, 17th floor, at 550 W. 7th Avenue in Anchorage. The call-in number is 1-800-315-6338, code 2851#.